

A NEW COURSE ON ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE

新编英美文学欣赏教程

戴桂玉 编著



中国社会科学出版社



A NEW COURSE ON ENGLISH AND AMERICAN
LITERATURE

新编英美文学欣赏教程

编著 戴桂玉

中国社会科学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

新编英美文学欣赏教程/戴桂玉编著. —北京:中国社会科学出版社,2001.3

新编经贸英语系列教材

ISBN 7-5004-2963-0

I. 新… II. 戴… III. ①英语-高等学校-教材 ②文学-作品-英国-高等学校-教材 ③文学-作品-美国-高等学校-教材 IV. H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2001)第 11137 号

责任编辑 王半牧

责任校对 宗 合

封面设计 谭国民

版式设计 王炳图

出版发行 中国社会科学出版社

社 址 北京鼓楼西大街甲 158 号 邮 编 100720

电 话 010—84029453 传 真 010—64030272

网 址 <http://www.cass.net.cn>

经 销 新华书店

印 刷 北京新魏印刷厂 装 订 广增装订厂

版 次 2001 年 3 月第 1 版 印 次 2001 年 3 月第 1 次印刷

开 本 787×1092 1/16

印 张 22.5 插 页 2

字 数 560 千字 印 数 1—3000 册

定 价 26.00 元

凡购买中国社会科学出版社图书,如有质量问题请与本社发行部联系调换

版权所有 侵权必究

新编经贸英语系列教材编委会

主编 周富强 王长江
编委 (按姓氏笔画为序)
王长江 李贻定 何勇斌
赵军峰 罗爱琼 周杏英
周富强 梁润森 褚东伟
霍海洪 鲍爱东 戴桂玉
魏辉良

总 序

国际国内经济贸易发展的新形势要求我们对国际经济贸易的理论与实践、对世界经济贸易的规律性、对我国坚持实行和进一步扩大对外开放的伟大事业有更深刻的认识与了解。鉴于国际国内经济发展的大趋势,依据高等学校外语专业教育指导委员会就关于外语专业本科教育改革提出的若干意见的要求,考虑到外经贸、商务英语专业的特点及社会对既懂外语又懂经贸、商务专业的复合人才的迫切需求,为满足广大中高级英语水平读者对适合于他们水平的经贸英语教材的强烈愿望,也考虑到目前我国经贸英语教材的现状 & 未来的发展,我们有责任和义务编写出一批内容新颖、信息可靠、语言规范、具有权威性的经贸英语教材及教学参考书。这套新编经贸英语系列教材就是我们基于上述种种考虑,通过认真研究、反复论证、深入调查、充分准备,编写出的一套吸取其他同类教材优点,又独具特色的最新经贸英语系列教材。希望通过这套系列教材,对我国外语专业及经贸专业院校尽快地、高效地培养更多更优秀的复合型外语人才做出一些贡献。

经贸英语系列教材的编写充分体现了时代特色,强调理论和实践的有机结合。针对英语专业、外贸英语、商务英语专业中高年级学生,国际贸易、国际金融、经济学、工商管理等其他经贸类专业的高年级学生和具有较高英语水平从事经贸商务工作的在职人员虽然过了专业英语八级或大学英语六级但在专业英语学习方面仍有困难的现状,编写出的一套衔接基础英语和专业英语的难度适中的经贸英语系列教材。该系列教材共有十一册。它们分别是《新编经贸英语阅读教程》、《新编经贸英语写作教程》、《新编经贸英语翻译教程》、《新编经贸英语报刊选读教程》、《新编经贸英语口译教程》、《新编经贸英语听力教程》、《新编经贸英语口语教程》、《新编英语国家文化基础教程》、《新编语言学基础教程》、《新编英美文学欣赏教程》、《新编中国文化基础教程》。

由周富强、王长江编著的《新编经贸英语阅读教程》是一本内容涉及国际贸易、国际经济、工商管理、国际金融、市场营销、财务会计、国际投资、国际服务、国际经济合作、知识经济等各个领域取材宽泛、材料翔实的经贸英语阅读教材。全书分十四个单元。每个单元包括A、B两篇课文、阅读材料、疑难词汇与词组、供思考讨论的问题及注释。课文对国际经济贸易各科理论、实践及其历史沿革和目前发展趋势作出系统的概述;阅读材料展示经贸理论热点;词汇与词组部分就超出大纲的生词及词组和专业术语作出了详细的解释以帮助读者快速理解课文内容;课后讨论问题从不同角度就课文相关内容提出问题以引导读者对所读理论知识作系统深入的思考并运用所学理论分析实际问题;注释就课文相关的理论知识给以较全面的展现,以加深读者对所学知识的理解,进而扩大读者的知识面。

由梁润森等编著的具有较强操作性和模仿性及实践性的《新编经贸英语写作教程》由十二课组成。第一课介绍商业书信的标准格式。第二课介绍通过哪些途径来发展新客户,开拓新市场。第三课介绍如何讯盘某一商品。第四课介绍实盘和虚盘的界定。第五课介绍常见的讨价还价的事实依据。第六课介绍签约和履行合同条款。第七课介绍各种普遍适用的付款方式。第八课介绍包装,租船定舱和集装箱运输。第九课介绍如何审查信用证和要求修改信用证。第十课介绍索赔和解决索赔争端。第十一课介绍电传传真通讯。第十二课介

绍制单收汇。书中的范文体现了在我国对外贸易灵活政策下的国际进出口业务有许多新做法和灵活做法。编者期望读者能从该教程中学会拟写符合规范的外经贸业务英文函电和电传传真,从而提高解决实际业务问题的能力。

由褚东伟等编著的《新编经贸英语翻译教程》是一本经贸翻译实践指导书,分英译汉篇、汉译英篇、翻译的商业化运作篇(翻译过程概说、自由职业、翻译公司和翻译现代化)。其中英译汉篇和汉译英篇为本书的主要部分,每篇分为信函、合同、商业文件和技术资料四个部分,每部分提供了大量的曾经被客户接受的翻译实例并对这些实例进行技术点评和规律总结。读者在学习翻译技巧的同时自然地熟悉各类文体,对英语写作也有一定的提高。翻译的商业化运作篇帮助读者走出篇章,讲述走向市场以翻译为职业、以翻译为事业的技巧。

由李贻定编著的《新编经贸英语报刊选读教程》收入了世界著名英文报刊的最新文章。考虑到世纪之末的世界网络经济发展的突飞猛进,电子商务的欣欣向荣,而在中国的金融部门及制造业等领域的现代化方面却出现了“瓶颈”现象,本书的编选突出了网络经济、电子商务、金融和制造业方面的文章。影响世界经济贸易发展潮流方面的有关市场营销、高科技等方面的文章也有不同程度的选入。鉴于新闻体裁文章的时效性,本教程的选材侧重预测未来的文章,这样就大大延长了本教程的时效性。为了增加该教程的灵活性及个性比,本书介绍了一些新闻体裁的阅读技巧,以供读者分析根据自己兴趣所选的文章。本教程还设计了一些使读者通过浏览找出文章观点的问题及概括文意的技巧,并介绍了在飞速发展的信息社会中阅读报刊杂志的一些新方法。

由赵军峰等编著的《新编经贸英语口语教程》分理论篇和实践篇。本书以理论篇为教学先导,针对口译的性质特征,从理论的角度向读者作一高屋建瓴的概述,使读者对口译的性质、特点、标准、过程、类型乃至译员的素质有一概括性的认识。本书实践篇结合经贸活动诸层面中出现的具体语境,如迎来送往、广告宣传、参观访问、商务谈判、礼仪祝词、人物专访等等,将口译训练融化在12个单元之中。该书各个单元训练所需的有声和文字材料均具有针对性、真实性和时效性,大部分取自全真的口译现场录音。该书取材覆盖面广,各单元兼顾英汉、汉英双向训练,有译前准备、口译笔记、语体模式识别与转换、信息的概括与增删以及按命题意义重组句型等编辑技巧训练。该书充分体现了口译理论与实践相结合、针对性与通用性相结合的特点。

由何勇斌等编著的《新编经贸英语听力教程》以培养读者英语笔记能力为重点。选用的材料包括经贸报告、经贸会谈等方面。该教程共分为18个单元。每单元可供4课时使用。每单元包括听前训练(课前背景材料阅读、词汇训练、难句预读),实听练习(笔记、听力理解监测题),听后练习(口头讨论或写作)三大部分。该教程配有《教师手册》,包括录音的书面材料、练习及答案两个部分。

由周杏英、罗爱琼编著的《新编经贸英语口语教程》分上下篇。上篇包括两大部分。第一部介绍迎接与送别外商的全过程(接待、交通安排、食宿及参观等活动)。第二部分是关于商务洽谈的全过程(询价、订货、运输、付款及索赔等)。下篇为阅读材料篇。主要是关于国内外著名城市、景点、著名宾馆、风俗人情、著名公司及著名产品介绍。上下篇紧密结合,全方位地为读者提供了内容新颖、紧扣时代脉搏的理想的经贸口语学习蓝本。

由周富强、霍海洪编著的《新编英语国家文化基础教程》共分为十四章。第一章概括介绍文化的特征、范畴、文化研究的历史及全球文化的发展。第二章概述主要英语国家简况。第三章介绍主要英语国家国土及其自然资源。第四章介绍英语国家的人民及社会状况。第五章论述英语及其变体的特征;着重比较对比英国英语和美国英语的异同。第六章简述英语国家的历史发展及其沿革规律。第七章比较对比英语国家的政治制度的异同。第八章着

重论述英语国家经济模式及商贸实践。第九章介绍宗教及其在英语国家文化中的地位。第十章使学习者对英语国家的教育体制及其发展状况有一全面的把握。第十一、十二章分别介绍了英语国家的文学和艺术的发展、演变及其特征。第十三章注重英语国家的媒体介绍。第十四章则综述了英语国家的国际关系。通过本教程,编者力图全面地介绍英语国家的民族风格、历史、语言特色、政治制度、经贸、文学、宗教、教育、新闻媒体、家庭生活、社会问题等有关文化背景的方方面面,为经贸英语学习者成功地参与国际商务活动,更有效地进行国际全面合作打下坚实的文化基础。

由戴桂玉等编者的《新编英美文学欣赏教程》具有把文学基本理论与文学名作欣赏融为一体来进行教学的特点,本书共分十六个单元。内容涵盖小说、诗歌和戏剧的基本要素、文学批评的基本原理以及主要的文学流派和写作技巧。本教程精选了一些有代表性和各具特色的作家的作品或选读来加深读者对文学本质、文学流派和文学风格的认识和理解。每篇作品或选读后面都有注释和本单元的文学要点讲解,以及作者的写作技巧、风格和主体的介绍;还有供读者理解的阅读思考题或课堂分析讨论题。本教程旨在让读者既能获得理论上的指导,又能得到文本分析的实践,以便有效地提高读者的文学欣赏水平和英文写作能力。

由魏辉良、谢元花编著的《新编语言学基础教程》是一本依照最新高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲(1999),立意新颖、材料详实、讲解透彻、可读性强的英语语言学教程。其目的在于使学生了解人类语言研究的最新成果,提高他们对语言的社会、人文、经济、科技以及个人修养等方面重要性的认识,培养语言意识,发展理性思维,以帮助拓宽学生的思路和视野,全面提高学生的语言素质。本书共分为十六章,其内容涉及语言的起源、结构、变迁、口语与书面语等普通语言学范畴及语言与思维、语言与大脑、语言与文化、语言习得、语言教学等应用语言学范畴。本书不仅适用于英语专业高年级本科生,也可作为非英语专业的本科生学习语言学基础知识的参考书。

由王长江、刘国华等编者的《新编中国文化基础教程》是一本内容涉及中国历史、宗教、哲学、文学、艺术、政治经济制度、法律、教育、风俗习惯以及中西文化交流等有关中国文化诸层面的基础教程。本书以英语写就,将使读者在学习英语的同时,加深对中国文化底蕴的了解,增强用英语表述中国文化内容的能力。为了帮助读者深刻理解课文内容,对中国文化的诸方面做深入的分析 and 思考,每章节后都附有词汇表以及思考题。本书除适用于学习英语的中国学生之外,对我国外事工作者、外经贸工作者和对中国文化感兴趣的外籍人员亦有裨益。

广东外语外贸大学
国际经贸学院
新编经贸英语系列教材编委会
2000年10月

前 言

目前我国英美文学教材种类繁多,有《文学史》、《文学作品选读》、也有《文学史与选读》,它们各具特色,各有不同的侧重点。本教程则着重介绍英美文学的基础知识和理论:包括散文、小说、诗歌和戏剧的基本要素及其演变和发展,以及文学批评的基本原理和主要的文学流派。同时遴选一些文学史上的重要作家和作品来加深读者对文学本质、文学流派和文学风格的认识和了解。为了便于教师把握课堂教学和经济课时,本书在小说部分主要精选了一些短篇作品,教师可根据学生的具体情况,一次讲授一篇作品,也可两次讲完一篇作品,灵活机动,酌情调整。

本教程编写的体例,除序言部分和其它各部分开头的文学要素和理论的叙述外,作家作品部分有:(1)作家生平与创作介绍;(2)作品内容摘要和写作风格与主题介绍;(3)选文;(4)注释;(5)阅读思考题和课堂分析讨论题。本书还附有文学术语词汇表。在教学中,文学要素和理论部分由教师把握,作家和作品介绍部分供学生参考;课堂上应以启发式和讨论式的教学为主,注重培养学生的理性思辨能力和理解分析能力;让学生在获得理论指导的同时又能得到文本分析的实践,以便有效地提高学生的文学欣赏水平和英文写作能力。

本书可作为高校英语专业和非英语专业学生的英美文学欣赏课程的教学用书和参考书,也可供广大英语教师和英美文学爱好者及具有一定英语水平的自学者作为进修读物。

本教程在编写过程中,参考了不少中外出版的英美文学史和作品选读方面的书籍,注释和思考题部分也参照了一些有关书籍,在参考文献部分都已一一列出。由于编者水平所限,书中错误缺点和考虑不周之处在所难免,恳切希望批评指正。

戴桂玉

2000年12月

Contents

Introduction

- I. What Is Literature? (1)
- II. What Is the Function of Literature? (1)
- III. How Do We Appreciate Literature? (3)

Chapter One Essay

- I. What Is Essay? (5)
- II. Selected Readings (6)
 - 1. Francis Bacon (6)
Of Studies
 - 2. Samuel Johnson (9)
Conversation
 - 3. Ralph Waldo Emerson (12)
Nature (Excerpt)
Self-Reliance (Excerpt)
 - 4. Henry David Thoreau (17)
Walden (Excerpts)

Chapter Two Fiction

- I. What Is Fiction? (24)
- II. The Elements of Fiction (26)
- III. Selected Readings (42)
 - 1. Henry Fielding (42)
The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling (Excerpt from Chapter VIII, Book Four)
 - 2. Washington Irving (47)
Rip Van Winkle (Excerpt)
 - 3. Edgar Allan Poe (56)
The Fall of the House of Usher
 - 4. Nathaniel Hawthorne (70)
The Minister's Black Veil
 - 5. Charles Dickens (80)
Oliver Twist (Excerpt: Chapter III)
 - 6. Emily Brontë (85)
Wuthering Heights (Excerpt from Chapter XV)
 - 7. Henry James (90)
The Portrait of a Lady (Chapter I and II)
 - 8. Kate Chopin (102)
A Pair of Stockings
 - 9. Stephen Crane (106)
The Red Badge of Courage (Excerpts from Chapters VII-XIII) (abridged)

10.	Sherwood Anderson	(123)
	The Egg	
11.	Jack London	(131)
	To Build a Fire	
12.	James Joyce	(141)
	Eveline	
13.	Virginia Woolf	(146)
	Mrs. Dalloway (Excerpt from Chapter I)	
14.	D. H. Lawrence	(151)
	The Rocking-Horse Winner	
15.	Katherine Mansfield	(162)
	Miss Brill	
16.	Ernest Hemingway	(166)
	A Clean, Well-Lighted Place	
	Hills Like White Elephants	
17.	Francis Scott Fitzgerald	(174)
	He Thinks He's Wonderful	
18.	William Cuthbert Faulkner	(190)
	The Bear	
	A Rose for Emily	
19.	Katherine Anne Porter	(207)
	The Jilting of Granny Weatherall	
20.	Ralph Ellison	(215)
	King of the Bingo Game	

Chapter Three Poetry

I.	What Is Poetry?	(223)
II.	The Elements of Poetry	(223)
III.	The Selected Readings	(232)
1.	William Blake	(232)
	London	
	The Tyger	
2.	Robert Burns	(235)
	A Red, Red Rose	
	Auld Lang Syne	
3.	William Wordsworth	(238)
	The Solitary Reaper	
	I Wandered lonely as a Cloud	
	She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways	
4.	George Gordon Byron	(242)
	The Isles of Greece	
	She Walks In Beauty	

5.	Percy Bysshe Shelley	(249)
	Song to the Men of England	
	Ode to the West Wind	
6.	John Keats	(255)
	On First Looking into Chapman's Homer	
	Ode to a Nightingale	
	Ode on a Grecian Urn	
7.	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	(262)
	A Psalm of Life	
	The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls	
8.	Lord Alfred Tennyson	(265)
	Break, Break, Break	
	The Eagle	
	Ulysses	
9.	Robert Browning	(271)
	My Last Duchess	
10.	Walt Whitman	(274)
	When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer	
	A Noiseless, Patient Spider	
	Song of Myself (Sections 1, 4, 6, 17, 42, 51, 52)	
11.	Emily Dickinson	(280)
	The Soul selects her own Society—	
	Success is counted sweetest	
	Because I Could Not Stop for Death—	
	My Life close Twice Before Its Close—	
12.	W. B. Yeats	(284)
	For Wild Swans at Coole	
	The Ballad of Father Gilligan	
	The Leader of the Crowd	
13.	Robert Frost	(288)
	Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening	
	Mending Wall	
	The Road Not Taken	
	Fire and Ice	
14.	Ezra Pound	(293)
	In a Station of the Metro	
	Erat Hora	
	The River-Merchant's Wife: A Letter	
15.	T.S. Eliot	(296)
	The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock	
16.	Wallace Stevens	(302)

The Load of Sugar Cane	
Anecdote of the Jar	
17. William Carlos Williams	(304)
The Red Wheelbarrow	
The Artist	
The Great Figure	
18. E. E. Cummings	(307)
since feeling is first	
r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r	
your little voice	
19. Langston Hughes	(311)
The Negro speaks of Rivers	
Dream Variations	
Mother to Son	
Chapter Four Drama	
I. What Is Drama?	(315)
II. The Elements of Drama	(316)
III. The Development of Drama	(320)
VI. Selected Reading	(323)
Edward Albee	(323)
The Zoo Story	
Glossary of Literary Terms	(341)

Introduction

I. What Is Literature?

Since the word "literature" came into English in the fourteenth century, there have been various attempts to define it. Usually it is defined as "imaginative" writing in the sense of "novel" or "poetry." But even the briefest reflection on what people commonly include under the heading of literature suggests that this will not do. Seventeenth-century English literature includes Shakespeare, Webster and Milton; but it also stretches to the essays of Francis Bacon, the sermons of John Donne and Bunyan's spiritual autobiography. It might even at a pinch be taken to encompass Hobbes's *Leviathan* or Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*. However, English literature in the nineteenth century usually includes Lamb but not Bentham, Macaulay but not Marx, Mill but not Darwin or Herbert Spencer. The early American literature also includes the histories, travel accounts, biographies, diaries, letters, autobiographies, sermons, and political writings, such as Francis Higginson's *New England's Plantation* (1630), Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* (1771-1790), Thomas Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence* (1776), Thomas Paine's political pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776).

From this we can see, English and American literature in the early period referred to the whole body of valued writing in society, whether factual or fictional: philosophy, history, essays and letters as well as dramas, poems. But since nineteenth century, literature has meant the high skills of writing in the special context of high imagination. A distinction between "fact" and "fiction", then, seems unlikely to lead us to the proper definition of literature. Maybe one of the best ways for us to define literature is to make clear the origin of literature. That is, whence comes literature?

Literature derives from human interest in telling a story, in arranging words in artistic forms, in describing in words some aspects of our human experiences. This human activity shows human desire to express and share experiences. Almost every one has such literary impulse, but only the writer can turn this impulse into literary form: a story, a poem, a play, or an essay, by the use of language. In this way, it can be appreciated by others. Therefore, literature can be defined as language artistically used to achieve identifiable literary qualities and to express significant messages. And literature is characterized with beauty of expression and form and with universality of intellectual and emotional appeal.

As an art, literature is not only a revelation of individual thoughts, desires, or existence, but also a reflection of the social relationship and social existence of the individual and the whole human beings as well. So creative artistic literature presents one of the essential sources for studying the relation between humanity and society. Great works of literature enable us to study people's approach to life and their ways of living and thinking. Literature embodies not only the socialized behavior of individuals, but also the process of their socialization as well; it speaks not only of individual experience, but also of the meaning of that experience. In this sense, literature is a mode of existing, a part of social practice and a process in which we realize ourselves.

II. What Is the Function of Literature?

First, literature serves the function of more than turning a mirror in the representation of human life. That's to say, literature is not a direct record or copy of human history and human affairs, it is an artistic

creation based on reality. We know that literature tells us not only what a society is like in a certain age, but also what individuals feel about it, and what they react to it. The portrait of what the fictional characters see and experience and what they desire, hope, and dream reveals the social situation of a certain historical period. The social meanings of the inner life of the individual are also associated with the central problems of social change. In this sense, literature functions somewhat as a mirror to reflect social and individual life.

But the writer of literature is not bound to fact in quite the same way as the historian, the economist or the scientist, whose studies are completely based on what has happened in the real world. The writer of literature has less limitation, but more freedom to comment on the fact, to speculate upon its cause and effect, and to adapt it for literary use. In this way, literature is not a copy, but more than a copy of what exists in reality. It is imaginative, interpretative as well as factual. It reflects a special view of human existence.

Second, literature helps to broaden and deepen our knowledge of human life and human experience. Since literature is, to an extent, a record of human history and human affairs, it can offer us knowledge of and insight into the nature of reality. Our interest in reading lies partly in the fact that in the process of reading we acquire plenty of information of human affairs from the past to the present. Because the writer of literature is full of perceptive or prophetic vision of human life, their writing, whether in the form of a story, a poem, a play, or an essay, can give us an insight into the tradition, custom, beliefs, attitudes, folklore, and values of the age in which it is written.

On the other hand, because literature is closely related to human experience, it can shed light on the complexity and ambiguity of human experiences and thus broadens readers' awareness of the possibilities of experiences. In this way, literature not only allows us a chance to participate in the experience of others, but also tries to influence our attitudes and expectations. For some people, it is a channel to get them familiar with a large experience. For others, it is an indirect way to obtain a philosophical or moral guidance. Therefore, literature not only offers us some new piece of information that broadens our knowledge of the world, but also provides a guidance for us on our life roads and enriches our life experiences indirectly.

Finally, the function of literature is to entertain. In his "Defense of 'An Essay on Dramatic Poesy'", John Dryden, the father of English literary criticism, remarks: "Delight is the chief, if not the only, end of poetry; instruction can be admitted but in the second place, for poesy only instructs as it delights." Apart from its function of informing, teaching, and moralizing, literature is primarily to give pleasure, to entertain those who voluntarily attend to it. Literature can delight readers in different ways from the most humorous and sensational to the most philosophical and profound, from the most absurd and comic to the most common place and tragic. The basic entertaining element of literature is the direct illusion of "real" life created in literary writing, which brings us back to the realities of human situations, problems, feelings, and relationships.

In addition, literature offers us an exciting narrative. It involves readers into a strange, interesting or adventurous life never experienced in their own. Thus, literature can temporarily lead readers away from their own time and place, sending them to some imaginary world that is completely foreign to them before. When readers are preoccupied with reading, they will forget their problems, troubles and obligations of everyday life for the time being. It is people's common desire to seek temporary relaxation from the pressure and burden in modern life. Reading of literature can fulfill this desire and make people entertained in a desired period of time.

III. How Do We Appreciate Literature?

Many students are fond of literature and can be deeply moved by the characterization of a novel or enchanted by the plot of a play. But when they are asked to tell why the novel or the play is good, they don't know how to comment on it because they don't know from what perspective or in what way to appreciate or to criticize it. This is the common problem faced by many non-literature-majored students. So they are eager to learn a simple formula that will set them straight once and for all concerning this vague and vast field of literature located somewhere between education and entertainment. However, there is no simple formula with which people can deal with the complexity and diversity of literature. Then how can people set about studying literature? Fortunately, in the exploration of literature, there are three basic approaches, that is, analytical, thematic, and historical approaches, which are helpful both for the learners and researchers of literature.

1. Analytical Approach

In the analysis of literature, the most frequently employed method is, perhaps, the analytical approach. The main concern of this approach is the basic elements of literary forms, such as a story, a poem, a play, or an essay. For example, the basic elements of fiction comprise plot, character, setting, point of view, theme, symbol, allegory, style, and tone. As for poetry, it also contains the critical terms of basic elements: meter, rhyme, stanza and etc. The basic elements in a drama include dialogue, story, character, and action. All these elements in a literary work relate to each other and integrate into a whole. If students can master these basic literary elements, they will have common language or common ground in the discussion, analysis, research and evaluation of a literary writing.

Usually when we analyze the different elements in a literary work, we will raise some basic questions for us to answer, for instance, 1) Is the setting important? If so, what is its function? Is it used to reveal, reinforce, or influence character, plot, or theme? 2) What methods does the author employ to establish and reveal the characters? Are the methods primarily of showing or telling? 3) What is the point of view: who talks to the reader? Is the point of view consistent throughout the work or does it shift in some way? 4) What is the rhyme scheme in the poem? What is the metrical pattern in the poem? 5) What stylistic devices contribute most to the play's dialogue? By asking and answering this kind of questions, students will be able to find out what is the writing style of the literary work and what is good and what is not so good in the writer's treatment of the subject.

2. Thematic Approach

The thematic approach is mainly concerned with the ideas and the themes of a literary writing. Literature is a reflection of human existence and human experience, then, our use of the thematic approach is to dig out what is represented about life and society in a literary work. By using this approach, we can obtain some philosophical and generalized ideas about peace and war, participation and alienation, friendship and hatred, men and women, responsibility and desertion, as well as the meaning of existence, the nature of humanity, the reality of love, death, society, individual, and so on.

3. Historical Approach

It has been more than two thousands of years since the appearance of literature in the world. The early form of literature involves the folktales, the ballads, the fables, the myths and legends, either in the form of

verse or prose. As the time passed by, different kinds of essays, dramas, and novels have appeared. The purpose of the historical approach is to illustrate the historical development of literature. By the means of this approach, students will learn that every literary work bears the unmistakable imprint of the period and culture in which it is written and that many of the writing methods and techniques which are frequently used today result from a process of slow, irregular experimentation and innovation. Furthermore, students will be aware that in every historical period there is a dominant literary school or trend that influences the author's outlook on life and society, his or her treatment of the subject matter and the theme of a writing, and his or her writing style and technique. In the literary history, there have existed such literary schools as classicism, romanticism, realism, naturalism, modernism, and postmodernism. Each mode of the literary trends reflects the prevailing ideas and the main writing features in a certain period of time.

In the study of literature, the three approaches should be employed synthetically, otherwise, we can not have a deep understanding and a thorough analysis of a literary writing. The reason is that the three approaches are interrelated. The historical approach demands the mastery of the basic elements of literature, and the purpose of our studying a literary work by analyzing the writing style and technique as well as the literary forms is to reveal how the style and technique contribute to the expression of human life and society. This book is to provide a detailed explanation of the literary terms and the basic elements of prose, novel, poem, and drama. It also let us get familiar with the different literary schools and writing styles by selecting some famous English and American writers' works with emphasis both on theme and style.

Chapter One Essay

I. What Is Essay?

“Essay” derives from the French *essai*, meaning “experiment,” “attempt.” As a literary term it is used to cover an enormous range of composition, from schoolboy exercises to thorough scientific and philosophical works, the only quality in common being the implied desire of the writer to reserve to himself some freedom of treatment. But the essay is also a recognized literary form in a more defined sense: it is understood to be a fairly short prose composition, in style often familiarly conversational and in subject either self-revelatory or illustrative (more or less humorously) of social manners and types. The originator of the form was the great French writer Michel de Montaigne (1533-92).

Montaigne’s essays were published in completed form in 1596, and translated by John Florio into English (1603). His starting-point is “Que sais-je?” (“What do I know?”) and it lead him into a serious inquiry into his own nature as he feels it, and into investigations of facts, ideas, and experiences as he responds to them. In this way, Montaigne initiated a kind of essay, which centers on moral preach with its thesis based on some anecdotes and lessons. As a matter of fact, this sort of essays is a kind of graceful art that reflects personal experience and possesses some biographical elements. It is deliberately worked out and carefully elaborated, at least, in style, so it is not as frank as a repentant writing. In 1597 the first great English essayist, Francis Bacon, published his first collection of essays, of a very different kind: they are impersonal and aphoristic, weightily sententious. The character writers, Sir Thomas Overbury and John Earle (1601?-65) use the classical model of the Greek writer Theophrastus, reminding one that with so indefinite a form it is impossible to be too precise about the dating of starting-points. Abraham Cowley published the first essays in English closely corresponding to what is now understood by the form, and perhaps shows the first sign of its degeneracy: easiness of tone, which in Montaigne is a graciousness of manner introducing a serious and interesting personality, but which in less interesting writers may be an agreeable cover for saying nothing in particular.

In the early years of 18th C Addison and Steele firmly established what is now known as the “periodical essay”—a kind of higher journalism, intended often to please rather than instruct, but in their case to instruct through pleasure. In creations such as Sir Roger de Coverley, they developed the Theophrastian character into a personal, idiosyncratic portrait anticipating the characterization of the novelists a little later in the century. Their graciousness and lightness of tone take point and interest from their serious and conscious social purpose. Dr Johnson in *The Rambler* and in his essays as “The Idler” used the weighty, impressive style soon to be regarded as unsuitable for the medium. Oliver Goldsmith in *The Citizen of the World* (1762) perfected the graceful, witty manner which came to be considered ideal for it.

If 18th C was what may be called the golden age of the English essay, the early 19th, in the work of Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt and De Quincey, was perhaps its silver age. In these writers, social comment combines with a confessional, autobiographical element which had never been so prominent in the English essay before. This was true to the autobiographical spirit of so much 19th-century literature. These essayists were links between the early Romantic poets—especially Wordsworth—and the mid-Victorian novelists; they shared the close interest in material surroundings characteristic of those poets, and their essays often contained character delineations related to such environmental settings. The earliest